

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8339

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJ: DIET DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY. LOWER HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE, WITH ONLY LDP AND DSP MEMBERS PRESENT, APPROVED JFY 76 BUDGET APRIL 8. JSP, JCP AND CGP ARE CONTINUING THEIR BOYCOTT, DESPITE EFFORTS OF LOWER HOUSE PRESIDENT TO BRING THEM AROUND. LDP NOW AIMING FOR MAY 10 LOWER HOUSE PASSAGE OF BUDGET, BUT LOWER HOUSE PRESIDENT HAS NOT DEFINITELY INDICATED HE WOULD CONVENE SESSION. PASSAGE OF BUDGET IN ABSENCE OF MAIN OPPOSITION PARTIES WOULD NORMALLY CAUSE MUCH FUROR IN JAPAN, BUT MEDIA HAS THUS FAR REFRAINED FROM MAKING IT A MAJOR ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

1. RECORD 29-DAY HIATUS IN DIET PROCEEDINGS CAME TO A CLOSE WITH APRIL 7 CONVENING OF LOWER HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE--WITH ONLY LDP AND DSP MEMBER PRESENT--AND ITS APRIL 8 APPROVAL OF JFY 76 BUDGET. LDP IS NOW AIMING FOR LOWER HOUSE PASSAGE OF BUDGET ON APRIL 10, IN ORDER TO ASSURE AUTOMATIC UPPER HOUSE APPROVAL BY MAY 10 EXPIRATION OF INTERIM BUDGET.

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2. DESPITE LAST MINUTE EFFORTS OF LOWER HOUSE PRESIDENT MAEO TO MEDIATE GOJ-OPPOSITION DISPUTE, JSP, JCP AND CGP DECIDED AT PARTY CHAIRMEN'S MEETING APRIL 8 TO CONTINUE BOYCOTT AND REAFFIRMED THEIR REPEATED DEMANDS FOR RENEGOTIATION WITH THE US, ETC. MEETING PUT AN END TO SPECULATION ON POSSIBILITY THAT JCP MIGHT BREAK OPPOSITION RANKS, BUT FAILED TO RESOLVE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JSP/CGP, WHICH SMELL BLOOD AND FAVOR AN IMMEDIATE LOWER HOUSE DISSOLUTION, AND JCP, WHICH IS PUSHING FOR A DISSOLUTION AFTER THE LOCKHEED AFFAIR IS FINALLY EXPOSED.

3. MAEO HAS STILL NOT INDICATED POSITIVELY THAT HE WOULD GO ALONG WITH LDP PRESSURES TO CONVENE LOWER HOUSE PLENARY SESSION ON APRIL 10 AND IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE HIS EFFORTS TO BRING OPPOSITION INTO LINE. MOST OBSERVERS DO NOT CREDIT HIM WITH MUCH POSSIBILITY OF SUCCESS, HOWEVER, AND ARE PREDICTING THAT HE WILL GO AHEAD WITH BUDGET APPROVAL ACCORDING TO THE LDP SCHEDULE.

4. COMMENT, BUDGET HAS NOT BEEN PASSED BY COMMITTEE IN ABSENCE OF MAIN OPPOSITION PARTIES SINCE 1952, AND SUCH ACTION WOULD NORMALLY INVITE CRIES OF HIGH-HANDEDNESS FROM MEDIA AND OPPOSITION PARTIES, INCLUDING CALLS FOR MASS DEMONSTRATIONS. DSP DECISION TO JOIN LDP, HOWEVER, SEEMS TO HAVE LEGITIMIZED DIET PROCEEDINGS TO A CERTAIN EXTENT AND MEDIA HAVE THUS FAR REFRAINED FROM CRITICAL COMMENT ON "IRREGULAR" PROCEDURE. WITHOUT SOME BUILD-UP OF PRESS CLAMOR, OPPOSITION WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO STIMULATE MEANINGFUL POPULAR PRESSURE. BUT, AS ONE LDP SOURCE HAS SAID, IF MEDIA DECIDED TO MAKE A MAJOR ISSUE OF THIS, IT CERTAINLY COULD.

HODGSON

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